

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable consideration of this application, as presently amended and in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

In the Final rejection of June 10, 2008, the Examiner included a rejection of Claims 1-14, 32, 33, 212-215 and 223 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Danks (USP 5,868,773, hereinafter Danks '773) in view of Danks (USP 5,607,440, hereinafter Danks '440). Claims 1-4, 32, 33, 212-215 and 223 remain active.

In the Advisory Action dated September 30, 2008, the Examiner has commented in response to the Amendment filed September 10, 2008 that Danks shows that the face of the guard adjacent the blade has planar parallel upper and lower surfaces. In this regard, Applicant notes that Danks '773 shows that the guard 15 has planar parallel upper and lower surfaces that are visible only in the cross-section view shown in Figure 5D and that a similar structure is shown in Figure 7A-9B in Danks '440. Applicant submits, however, that these appear only in the cross sectional views and, in addition, the planar guard does not have a distal end having a substantially uniform, continuous taper so as to form an edge angle smaller than a blade edge angle of the blade when viewed in plan view as presently claimed in each of independent Claims 1 and 212. Moreover, to even more clearly define over the teachings of Danks '773 and Danks '440, each of the independent claims has now been amended to indicate that the guard has upper and lower surfaces that are located on an exterior portion of the guard, the upper and lower surfaces each being substantially planar and which are parallel to the upper and lower surface of the blade. This limitation clearly distinguishes these independent claims from the teachings in Danks insofar as the exterior portion of guard 15 in Danks '773 and the shield 15 having a distal end 51 as shown in Danks '440 are each sloped with respect to the upper and lower blade surfaces. In view of the fact that a sloped outer surface is shown in each of these references, it is submitted that Claims 1

and 212 as now amended clearly patentably define over such references as well as the remaining references of record. Accordingly, an early and favorable Office Action is believed to be in order and the same is hereby respectfully requested.

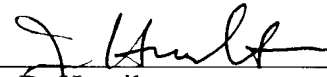
Respectfully submitted,

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